

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 13989 291100Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 AID-05 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 AGRE-00 OMB-01
/090 W

-----110965 301056Z /23

R 291036Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0873
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 13989

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: FR, VM, EAID, ADB
SUBJ: FRENCH TAKING SLOW STEP FORWARD ON ASSISTANCE
TO VIETNAM

REF: VIENNA 3985

1. PRESS REPORTS APRIL 26-27 INDICATED THAT VIETNAMESE
AMBASSADOR TO PARIS VO VAN SUNG HAD CALLED ON PRIME
MINISTER BARRE ON APRIL 25 TO DISCUSS MOVING FORWARD ON
FRENCH-VIETNAMESE COOPERATION PROGRAMS. ACCORDING TO
LE MONDE, VO VAN SUNG EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SPEEDING UP
SUCH PROJECTS AS THE STEEL COMPLEX BEING HANDLED BY
CREUSOT-LOIRE AND OIL PROSPECTING BY ELF-ACQUITAINE.
VIETNAMESE ALSO SOUGHT RAPID CONVENING OF THE MIXED
FRENCH-VIETNAMESE COMMISSIONS ON ECONOMIC AND
INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND ON CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL
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COOPERATION, WHICH WERE AGREED DURING THE VISIT HERE
BY PRIME MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG LAST YEAR. LE MONDE
REPORTED THAT VO VAN SUNG, IN COMMENTS TO THE PRESS,
"HAD LET IT BE UNDERSTOOD" THAT BARRE WOULD NOT RPT
NOT VISIT VIETNAM IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

2. WHEN WE ASKED QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR SOUTHEAST

ASIA (GORY) ABOUT THESE PRESS REPORTS, HE DOWNPLAYED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEETING. ACCORDING TO GORY FRENCH-VIETNAMESE COOPERATION HAS BEEN LANGUISHING IN RECENT MONTHS BECAUSE OF WHAT THE FRENCH INTERPRETED AS A LACK OF INTEREST ON THE PART OF THE VIETNAMESE. HE SPECULATED THAT THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN DUE TO VIETNAMESE CONCENTRATION ON THEIR INTERNAL PROBLEMS, OR THE CONFLICT WITH KAMPUCHEA. WHATEVER THE REASON, THE VIETNAMESE HAD NOT EVEN SHOWN MUCH INTEREST IN USING CREDITS OFFERED TO THEM BY THE FRENCH. IN HIS MEETING WITH BARRE, VO VAN SUNG HAD EVIDENTLY MANIFESTED A RENEWED INTEREST IN FRENCH ASSISTANCE. BUT THE CONCRETE EFFECTS OF THE MEETING WERE LIMITED TO AGREEMENT THAT THE MIXED COMMISSION ON CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION SHOULD MEET BEFORE THE END OF MAY. IT IS STILL HOPED THAT THE MIXED COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION, WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT TO BOTH SIDES, WILL BE ABLE TO MEET BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, AS ORIGINALLY FORESEEN.

3. PRESS REPORTS DREW A LINK BETWEEN THE VO VAN SUNG-BARRE MEETING AND THE STATEMENT BY THE FRENCH REP AT THE MEETING OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (REFTEL), URGING ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM. HOWEVER, GORY CLAIMED THIS WAS PURELY COINCIDENTAL, AND TOLD US THAT THE FRENCH REP AT THE ADB MEETING HAD NOT EVEN COORDINATED
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HIS STATEMENT WITH THE QUAL.
HARTMAN

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